

Smart wintering in Southland

Winter crops are an important source of livestock feed between May and September. Good management of winter grazing (including pasture-based wintering) can help prevent environmental and animal welfare issues.

Good winter grazing management:

- Supports animal health and welfare
- Protects topsoil
- Reduces loss of sediment and nutrients and prevents harmful bacteria reaching waterways
- Ensures a contingency plan for bad weather
- Reduces stress and gives confidence to farmers and staff.



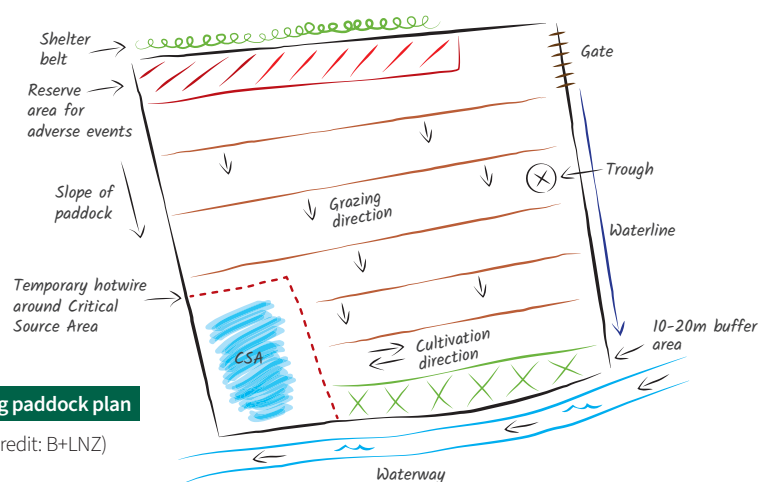
Setting up for good grazing practice.

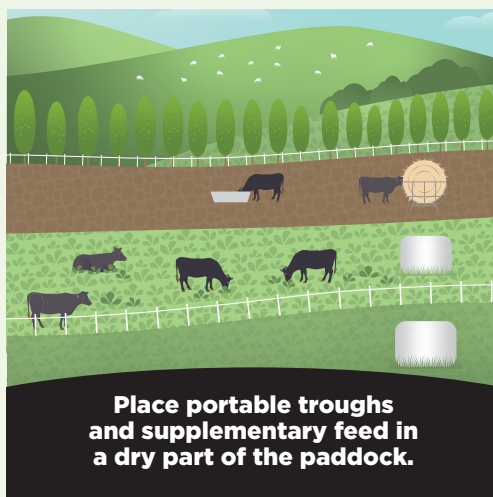
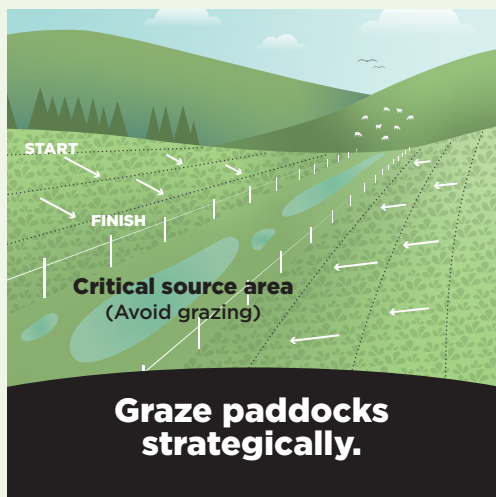
(Credit: DairyNZ)

Focusing on good management can help you reduce risks no matter what rules are in place. This applies to all stock types.

Example of a winter grazing paddock plan

(Credit: B+LNZ)





Credits: B+LNZ

Key rules in the Southland Water and Land Plan for intensive winter grazing require:

- That intensive winter grazing does not occur on more than 50ha or 15% of the area of the land holding (farm), whichever is the greater
- A 20-metre buffer from any Regionally Significant Wetland
- A 20-metre buffer from the bed of any other waterway (regardless of whether there is any water in it at the time) on a slope of 10 degrees or more
- A 10-metre buffer from the bed of any other waterway (regardless of whether there is any water in it at the time) on a slope of 10 degrees or less
- That critical source areas must not be cultivated or grazed
- Ensure you have a prepared Southland Farm Plan, as this is a requirement of winter grazing under the Southland Water and Land Plan.

Critical source areas (CSAs) are a landscape feature like a gully, swale or a depression (including ephemeral flow paths) that accumulates runoff (sediment and nutrients) from adjacent flats and slopes, and delivers it to surface water bodies (including lakes, rivers, artificial watercourses and modified watercourses) or subsurface drainage systems and a non-landscape feature that has high levels of contaminant losses, such as silage pits, fertiliser storage areas, stock camps and laneways.

Winter checklist

Get your written winter grazing plan done early and share it with your team

- Include lessons from last year
- Ensure clear expectations for everyone on farm
- Use it as proof of good practice
- If using graziers, check their plan
- Ensure animals are registered in the NAIT system and remember to record NAIT movements within 48 hours
- Ensure you have a prepared Southland Farm Plan, as this is a requirement of winter grazing under the Southland Water and Land Plan

Preplace baleage and recycle plastic

- Place supplementary feed before grazing to reduce wet soil compaction
- Locate feed in dry areas, high points, away from waterways and CSAs
- The Southland Water and Land Plan has rules for the pasture-based wintering of cattle. Ensure you know the requirements of this before winter
- Recycle or properly dispose of baleage wrap. For advice on this go to es.govt.nz/farm-waste

Look after your animals' welfare

- Have adequate feed and water available. Use a feed budget or feed planner
- Include at least a 10% buffer in your winter feed budget
- Transition animals onto and off winter feed
- Give animals enough space for normal feeding, resting and social behaviour
- Have stock water / portable troughs in each break
- Check stock health often. Prevent calving and lambing on mud
- Shift stock to a suitable surface before birthing – to give calves and lambs a good start
- Have access to shelter and well-drained ground for lying on
- Take actions in extreme or prolonged wet weather (include them in your wintering plan)

Protect buffers and critical source areas like swales and gullies

- Do not cultivate CSAs. Fence them off to exclude stock (no grazing of CSAs)
- Consider sediment ponds or traps downstream of wintering areas

Leave at least a 10-metre setback for land slope less than 10 degrees and a 20-metre setback for land slope more than 10 degrees from rivers, lakes, wetlands, or drains

Graze paddocks strategically

- Fence breaks across slopes. Graze from the top down. Standing crop acts as a filter
- OR, if there is a waterway in the paddock, start grazing furthest from it and leave a buffer at the bottom of the slope
- Move portable troughs with the break
- Locate troughs away from wet areas and CSAs
- Back fence to limit unnecessary stock movement (reduce soil damage and runoff)

Get support or advice if uncertain

- See back page for industry support and one-on-one help
- Contact Environment Southland for advice on your wintering plans on 0800 76 88 45 or email service@es.govt.nz

Take photos to demonstrate your good practice

Southland contacts for free support and advice:

- On Farm Support (MPI) **0800 70 71 33** | SouthlandOFS@mpi.govt.nz
- Beef + Lamb New Zealand **0800 BEEFLAMB** (0800 233 352) | enquiries@beeflambnz.com
- DairyNZ **0800 4 DairyNZ** (0800 4 324 7969) | info@dairynz.co.nz
- Deer Industry NZ **04 473 4500** | info@deernz.org
- Federated Farmers **0800 327 646** | 0800@fedfarm.org.nz
- OSPRI **0800 482 463** | info@ospri.co.nz
- Environment Southland land sustainability team **0800 76 88 45** | service@es.govt.nz

If you see issues of concern, please contact:

- Federated Farmers for confidential industry support **0800 327 646**
- MPI for animal welfare concerns **0800 00 83 33**
- Environment Southland's Pollution Hotline to report air, land or water pollution **0800 76 88 45**

Websites with further information about wintering:

Open your smartphone camera, point it at the QR code, and tap the link that appears.

Beef + Lamb
New Zealand

beeflambnz.com



DairyNZ

dairynz.co.nz



Deer Industry NZ

deernz.org



Environment
Southland

es.govt.nz



FAR

far.org.nz



MPI

mpi.govt.nz



**Finding it
tough?**

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